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WPA Member News
New member announcement, reLogistics lends a hand to disaster recovery efforts.

UPALL® Protectors in UK
James Jones & Sons has announced the launch of its UPALL® pallet protectors.

North American Softwood Prices
Softwood prices listed as of September 26, courtesy of NRCAN.

iGPS Offers Sanitized Pallet Availability
iGPS now offers sanitized pallets which its says meet FDA requirements for direct food contact.
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Cover Story: NWPCA's PDS 5.3

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Forest covers approximately 751 million acres, roughly a third of the land mass in the US. 54% of the forest is publicly owned with the balance held in the hands of private land owners. Canada has 860 million acres of forest cover of which 94% is publicly owned and managed with the remaining 6% owned privately.

While harvesting wood occurs under different types of land ownership, forest management is governed by federal and state/provincial regulations that ensure that forest resources are well protected for the future.

The North American wood products industry is a world leader in sustainable forestry practices. Forest certification involves independent third party assessment that companies are operating in accordance with the principles of sustainable forest management that value the socio-economic and environmental contributions of forests.

The total size of managed forests in the US and Canada under the four internationally recognized forest certification programs used in North America is 500 million acres. This represents roughly half of the world’s certified forests.

North American forestry management practices ensure that deforestation and other threats to biodiversity do not occur.

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3. Forests and Forest Products in Canada: State of the Forest 2018 - Natural Resources Canada
4. Forests and Forest Products in Canada: State of the Forests 2017 - Natural Resources Canada
5. “Deforestation Canada: What are the Facts” - Natural Resources Canada

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Patrick Atagi @rwoca_policy · 8h
Raising profile of #NWPCA_policy at State Government Affairs Council, good to see policy partner Donna Harmon of A&HA
WPA Member Makes Impact Across the Pond

James Jones states that it has introduced an innovation set to dramatically improve the lifespan of wooden pallets. The product is a new variation of pointGUARD Pallet Protectors (WPA-member United Pallet Services.)

James Jones & Sons Ltd, one of the UK timber industry’s largest and most progressive timber companies, has revealed a new venture it says will dramatically improve the quality, length of life, and environmental benefits of wooden pallets, and significantly reduce their whole life cost. UPALL® manufactures and fits robust protectors at the points of entry on wooden pallets. This means the pallets last longer, need far fewer repairs and stay in circulation for longer than conventional unprotected pallets.

The protectors are based on the US pointGUARD invention, which UPALL® has redesigned and developed for the European market. Tests on the protectors at Virginia Tech show that they increase the lifespan of a wooden pallet by three times and potentially longer. This is because UPALL® – protected pallets experience substantially less damage with significantly fewer wood chippings and debris. This reduces downtime, equipment maintenance and housekeeping, and improves safety.

A UPALL protected pallet remains in circulation earning money for longer with quantifiable savings in inspection, repair, transport and trip costs. UPALL pallet-protectors guard key components of the pallets – blocks and base boards. The pallet is therefore much more resistant to impact, giving lower damage rates and extending the lifespan of the pallet. The pallets and their protectors are completely repairable to maintain high quality standards. All materials used are fully recyclable.

“The UPALL-protected pallet is a truly innovative and groundbreaking development in wooden pallets, which are critical to so many supply chains,” stated Gil Covey, Chairman of UPALL Ltd.

“Rigorous independent testing and trials show that this proprietary product brings remarkable increases to the lifespan of a pallet and reduces its cost significantly. Meanwhile, the considerable increase in service life gives significant environmental advantages over unprotected wooden pallets.”

The protectors can be supplied in corporate colors, with printed logos and other designs. The enhanced appearance of the pallets makes them ideal for display directly at the point of sale in retailers.

The UPALL product uses virgin copolymer polypropylene pallet protectors, which are fitted to new high-quality, heat-treated and kiln-dried wooden euro
James Jones & Sons Ltd of the UK has entered into a new venture to provide pallets fitted with plastic protectors. a move that should significantly improve pallet life.

pallets (800 x 1200). Quality construction and consistent dimensional tolerances ensure the pallets remain suitable for all mainstream handling equipment and are compatible with automated handling and storage applications.

UPALL® has registered for full European patent and trademark protection. UPALL pallet protectors are currently available for Euro pallet sizes with other pallet specifications planned for the future.

Range Board appoints Mr. Jon Guyett as CEO

Range International, the manufacturer of Re>Pal recycled plastic pallets, the Australian-listed company that utilizes proprietary technology to convert low-cost mixed plastic waste into plastic pallets which it offers at a similar price to wood, has named Jon Guyett as new CEO. He has extensive experience working throughout Asia in the manufacturing and supply chain sectors having been based in Asia.

The company has begun production of its Re>Pal pallets in Indonesia and marketing efforts, predominantly in the Asia-Pacific region.
The Membership Drive Is On!

This year’s membership drive is now underway, and as always, the competition will be intense.

In addition to valuable cash prizes, the winner now also receives the membership trophy, presented at the Annual Meeting. With the highly successful 2017 Annual Meeting now in the books, it is time to work toward 2018.

When you recruit new members, the entire WPA membership is the winner!

New members can join and pay on the website. Here is the link: www.westernpallet.org
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North American Softwood Prices

Weekly softwood lumber prices to September 26, 2017 are shown below, sourced at http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/forests/industry/13309.

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iGPS Logistics is now offering direct food contact level safety for customers. iGPS Logistics, the leading plastic pallet pooling service provider in North America, now offers the capability to deliver direct food contact level safety for its pallet customers, the company states. The revolutionary method applies a food contact surface sanitizer to iGPS plastic pallets, reducing contaminants by an average of 96%.

The Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) requires transport equipment, such as pallets, to be cleaned and sanitized to prevent food from becoming contaminated. Industry experts have stated that 5,000 – 10,000 CFU (colony-forming unit of Aerobic Plate Count bacteria) per sampling swab are acceptable levels of sanitization for pallets. Testing on the sanitized iGPS plastic pallets showed consistently at less than half these minimum acceptable levels.

iGPS pallets on display at the PACK EXPO show in Las Vegas, Nevada, September 27, 2017. The company now is offering sanitized pallets.

Have you switched yet?
See how iGPS can revolutionize your supply chain today.
"This sanitization process is the latest step in bringing our clients the best possible products, solutions and services that focus on food safety and hygiene, that maximize cost savings," said Jeff Liebesman, CEO of iGPS Logistics. "The testing results of the new process are truly extraordinary – iGPS now offers customers a level of cleanliness beyond industry standards or current capabilities."

Targeting the food industry trends towards food safety and automation have been a focus for iGPS since the new company was formed subsequent to the bankruptcy.

According to Liebesman, iGPS will offer its pallets in three separate levels of sanitation, including "as is" as well as washed, and finally, sanitized. The pallet pooling provider will also offer trailer cleaning services to carriers coming to pick up pallets from its service centers.
NWPCA RELEASES PALLET DESIGN SYSTEM™ 5.3

State-Of-The-Art Engineering Drives Optimization  New Analysis for Recycled Pallets, Fasteners

Building on a 33-year history of innovation, the Pallet Design System™ (PDS) development team of software and structural engineers applied new, state-of-the-art, engineering and analysis techniques not previously used in the pallet industry. ANSYS™ simulation and 3-D modeling software was used as a tool to test and verify structural engineering models. The extensive modeling and testing ensures PDS users have access to the most advanced and accurate technology available for the design of wood pallets.

The robust engineering enables a much more refined analysis that allows for higher levels of pallet design optimization, additional analysis capabilities, and paves the way for future development of PDS. Additionally, PDS 5.3 provides automated calculations of stacking patterns for containers on pallet, or custom positioning of individual containers and a new strapping slot analysis for deckboards and stringers. The lateral collapse resistance analysis is also more detailed than previous versions.

“Our latest research and development has led to enhanced structural models for this release of PDS,” commented Kristen DeLack, PE, PDS Structural Engineer. “With these advancements, PDS now reports when the connection strength is the “critical member” that limits the strength

Registration for the 2018 WPA Annual Meeting Opens October 1

The 2018 WPA Annual Meeting runs Jan. 12 - 16, 2018, Rancho Mirage, California. Follow this link to register or find out more.
the “critical member” that limits the strength of the pallet,” added DeLack.

For those who remanufacture pallets, the release of PDS 5.3 also enables users to analyze recycled pallets with notched stringers (except RAL and 4 Corner support conditions). “This was a very popular request among current PDS users that our team worked hard to develop this past year,” said Dr. Brad Gething, NWPCA Director of Science & Technology Integration.

The release of version 5.3 also coincides with the recent NWPCA announcement of the development of new user interface and print-out report materials in four additional languages: Spanish, French, Italian and German, to be completed in two phases by summer 2018.

The NWPCA is dedicating significant resources as part of the implementation of our strategic plan to ensure that PDS remains cutting edge technology and further solidifies PDS as the global standard for unit load pallet design. Shane Thompson, NWPCA’s Board Chair added, “Expect to see more from the PDS development team for 2018. NWPCA and The Pallet Foundation investments, totaling nearly $1.5 million over the next two years, will advance our industry and benefit each of our companies, as we make PDS the international language for pallet design.”

For more information on Pallet Design System™ 5.3, read the detailed product release.

Take a moment right now to renew your WPA membership for 2017-2018. It is as easy as clicking on the WPA membership link!
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WPA Annual Meeting
January 12-16, 2018
Rancho Las Palmas Resort & Spa
Rancho Mirage, CA

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You can expect an outstanding lineup of speakers on topical issues, plenty of time to network with old and new members at receptions dinners, and golf. Exhibit space is limited. Sign up for exhibit tables opens September 11, 2017.

Exhibit Cost
- $300 - Until November 1st
- $400 - After November 1st
Exhibit space includes a skirted, 8’ table arranged around the periphery of the meeting room. Additional amenities will be available through the Rancho Las Palmas Resort & Spa and are the responsibility of the Exhibitor.
- Exhibitors must be members of WPA with dues current, sign up and pay for an exhibit space, and pay the annual meeting registration fee - online meeting registration opens October 1st.

Exhibit Schedule
- Saturday, January 13th - 5:00 - 6:30 PM - Exhibit Showcase during WPA welcome reception
- Sunday, January 14th - 7:00 - 8:00 AM - Exhibit Showcase during WPA breakfast
- Sunday, January 14th - 12 Noon - 1:00 PM - Exhibit Showcase during lunch
- Monday January 15th - 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM - Exhibit Showcase during WPA breakfast
Set-up starts at 12:00 Noon, Saturday, January 13th, and should be ready by 5:00 PM, just in time for the welcome reception. Breakdown can start after 11:00 AM, Monday, January 15th, and be cleared by 2:00 PM.

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January 14, 2018
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Modern Materials Handling recently released the welcome results of its 2017 reader pallet survey, along with the accompanying annual webcast, featuring remarks from Dr. Mark White (click here to watch the presentation replay.) As an annual survey, it is one of the few consistent windows we have into the U.S. pallet market. (We also just posted the results of an Australian pallet survey, which can be accessed at this link.)

The survey results can be challenging to interpret, as they include responses from the industrial sector as well as from the consumer goods supply chain. While the latter segment gravitates towards 48×40" footprint and rental, the industrial sector is much more diverse in terms of pallet usage and has not developed a significant rental presence. Also keep in mind that participant responses do not correlate to the percentage of pallets being used, only the percentage of respondents who use at least some of that pallet type. For example, a respondent could acknowledge using wood pallets, plastic pallets, and wood composite pallets, but we have no information about what proportion of each.

The results didn’t offer anything major in the way of shifts, although a few of the slides could possibly indicate subtle tide changes for pallet selection in the future. There were also a few obvious points worth mentioning. For instance, there seems to be an incremental improvement in customer perception of used wood pallet quality, as well as fewer pallet users indicating they are experiencing availability problems (22% versus 31% in 2016), as shown in the graph (facing page.)

Another trend noted the growing use of smaller sized pallets. Half pallets (24 x 20-inch) were used by 11% of respondents in 2017, compared to 5% in both 2016 and 2015. Half pallets are increasingly valued for their value at retail as well as other benefits. One important driver for half pallets over the past few years has been their promotion by CHEP.

Non-wood pallets also showed small increases, which Dr. White said was predictable, given export ISPM 15 requirements for solid wood pallets, as well as other factors such as food safety. For example, 45% reported using plastic pallets this year, up from 38% (2016) and 40% (2015). Wood composite pallets were used by 18% of those people surveyed, up from 15% in each of the previous two years. Metal pallet users included 10% of respondents, versus 5% (2016) and 9% (2015), while corrugated pallet users were at 8% (3% in 2016 and 6% in 2015).
What’s Behind “Other?”

A few of the slides show growth in the “other” category and could portend to more interesting shifts in pallet usage.

For example, the last slide in Dr. White’s presentation shows the percentage of respondents shipping to well known national retailers such as Walmart, Costco, Target and Home Depot, etc. With just a few exceptions, notably Sears, the percentage of respondents shipping to each of these retailers, seems to be subtly down in 2017. The list, he notes, includes only bricks & mortar retailers. The “other” line for national retailers, however, shows solid double-digit growth in 2017, which he suggests could be due to the increasing importance of e-commerce providers such as Amazon.

The other significant takeaway identified by Dr. White is also in the “other” category. It pertains to the response to the question, As a result of any problems with used wood pallets, what options have you considered? “Other” jumps from 25% (2016) to 30% in 2017, Dr. White offers that it might indicate a growing interest in third party management providers. As opposed to pallet rental providers, which typically own the pallets and rent them to pallet users on a per-trip or per-day basis, third party pallet management providers typically offer management support for pallet user owned pallets. They provide services such as pallet design and procurement, quality control, inventory control and management, pickup, sorting and repair, as well as relocation. This observation is supported by a slide that appears in the Modern Materials Handling print article, which shows The Pallet Alliance (16%), 9Bloc (16%) and Ongweoweh (11%) as pallet management options being considered by readers.
Australian Industry Survey Continues to Look at Pallets as “Necessary Evil”; Challenged by Pallet Management and Loss

In spite of continued hype about Internet of Things, Big Data, food hygiene and more emerging trends, a new pallet survey from Australia shows that pallets still are viewed as a necessary evil rather than as an opportunity to enhance their supply chains. Offered as an online survey, the Australian Pallet Survey 2017 received responses from 81 Australian business in May and June. Industry consultations generated further insights. The report (citing research from Freedonia) indicates that there are currently about 140 million pallets in the Australian pool with an annual replacement of 56 million pallets.

According to the report, the pallet is perceived as a necessary piece of equipment with little intrinsic value in relation to the product supply chain. This view persists, in spite of indications that companies incur significant costs associated with their inability to control and manage pallet usage.

The report notes that this viewpoint may change in the future as trends such as “whole of the supply chain” product planning, increased material handling automation and tracking technologies become more entrenched. Survey respondents cited cost as the prevailing concern for companies which buy or rent pallets. Daily rental price (51% of respondents), purchase price (38%), cost per use (15%) and total cost per year (28%) were selected. Other key factors included:

- Customer requirements
- Strength
- Durability
- Rackability
- Ability to reuse the pallet without repair
- Safety
- Availability
- Ability to clean the pallet
- Meeting regulatory requirements
- Contamination
- Weight
- Repairability
- Ease of disposal
- Recyclability and life cycle impacts.

No surprise for the Australian market, 44% of respondent companies reported that the cost of pallets in purchase or rental was a concern. The biggest pallet problem reported by respondents has to do with pallet control, involving the management of pallet inventory and the loss of pallets (selected by 66% and 41% of respondents respectively).
Other concerns, in order of frequency, were:

- Safety
- Quality
- Availability when required
- Poor durability/pallet life
- Limited choice of suppliers
- Managing repairs of pallets
- Contamination risks
- Poor customer service from suppliers
- Variation in sizes e.g. EU standard preferred
- Pallet disposal costs
- Theft.

As the world’s most mature pallet pooling market, pooling dominates in Australia, with two-thirds of respondents saying they use rental pallets. Flexibility and purchase avoidance were cited as benefits of pooling, along with the elimination of repair responsibility. According to the report:

The downsides to the rental model were identified as the exposure to ongoing fees for lost pallets (80%), the total cost of pallet operations (48%) and a lack of transparency regarding costs (32%). Other less frequently selected issues associated with rental were the lack of control over pallet audits, theft of pallets, and the limited selection of pallet types.

Plastic pallets also were touched upon in the survey. Around 22% of surveyed businesses said they expected to expand their use of plastic pallets over the next two years as a result of customer requirements and regulatory mandates related to product and worker safety. Hygiene and avoidance of contamination were primary considerations favoring plastic pallets. Key concerns about plastic included rackability and strength. When questioned on the major disadvantages of plastic pallets, the cost was identified as the primary issue, while rackability was noted by 36% of responses as a concern, followed by repairability and load capability.

One problematic trend identified in the survey is pallet size diversity, creating material handling challenges in storage and freight. The growth of import pallets, retailer-configured pallets, and pallets associated with warehouse automation are contributing to pallet size diversity. The report identified increased importation of pallets from Asia and Europe as being an issue, along with a diversity of pallet footprints created by particular retailers.

The survey results indicated that pallet control remains a significant problem for the pallet owner, renter, and supplier. In spite of the costs involved, the problem is exacerbated by a lack of effort in establishing effective pallet control. “While there are technologies available to track and trace the pallet,” a report about the survey in Transportation & Logistics News states, “these have proven too expensive to date to implement. It is unclear whether this is a false economy, given the costs associated with lost pallet inventory and as the technologies become more common.”
Brambles named Industry Category Leader in 2017 Dow Jones Sustainability World Index

Brambles, operating in more than 60 countries primarily through the CHEP and IFCO brands, has been ranked the top performing company by the Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI) in the global Commercial Services and Supplies industry category for 2017. Brambles’ solutions and sustainable business model are based on the provision of approximately 590 million reusable pallets, crates and containers for shared use by multiple participants throughout the global supply chain.

Representing the ‘gold standard’ for corporate sustainability, the DJSI is the first global index to track leading sustainability-driven companies based on RobecoSAM’s analysis of financially material Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) factors and S&P Dow Jones Indices’ robust index methodology. The DJSI assessed 2,400 of the largest companies in the S&P Global Broad Market Index to find the (top 10%) most sustainable in each industry. Brambles was ranked second in its category in 2016. In 2017, Brambles increased performance in key areas such as Customer Relationship Management, Environmental and Social Reporting, Corporate Governance and Code of Conduct.

Brambles CEO, Graham Chipchase, said: “We are extremely proud of this recognition. Brambles’ approach to sustainability is core to the long-term value we create for all our stakeholders. Through the successful combination of our circular, “share and reuse” business model, our global scale and supply-chain expertise, we are able to reduce operating costs and demand for natural resources, both in our own company and across the world’s supply chains.”

Read more.


A new report provides the consumer goods sector with proven, tangible solutions to reduce the nearly $15 billion annual cost of unsaleable goods or products that cannot be sold due to their condition.

The Collaborative Strategies to Reduce Unsaleables report was released this week at the Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals (CSCMP) annual conference. The report ranks solutions with a track record of success.
and provides implementation recommendations. The report was completed by CHEP for the Trading Partner Alliance (TPA), an industry affairs leadership group formed by the Food Marketing Institute (FMI) and the Grocery Manufacturers Association (GMA). A supporting report outlining the unsaleable goods challenge, Unsaleables 101, can be accessed here.

“Reducing unsaleable goods is a priority for retailers, manufacturers, and their suppliers,” said Daniel Triot, Senior Director at TPA. “This report effectively documents the causes of unsaleable goods and provides trading partners with clear instruction for reducing them and the impact they have on efficiency, sustainability, and profitability.”

The recommendations are based on an extensive, year-long analysis predicated on dozens of interviews with industry experts conducted by CHEP for the TPA Joint Industry Unsaleables Leadership Team (JIULT). The study captured and analyzed 48 unsaleable goods reduction strategies and placed them into seven categories based on the frequency of use and impact:

“We are honored to be selected by the TPA for this project, and to be a member of the JIULT,” said Todd Hoff, Vice President of Marketing and Customer Solutions at CHEP. “As a collaborative industry team, we can successfully limit the impact of unsaleable goods on both retailers and manufacturers – just a 1% reduction through process improvements would be a collective gain of more than $100 million annually.

Hoff stressed that the purpose of the study, firstly, was to point out that unsaleables are not just owned by a single function, but are shared by many different functions. The initial task was to introduce an Unsaleables 101 with a standardized terminology that would promote a common understanding. Secondly, and most exciting, he noted, was how to best go about working together. “This is why Daniel’s association, as a collaborative effort between manufacturers and retailers, is the perfect fit,” he stated. “The report is all about best practices for working together to find the best value.”

Rather than just sharing the pain of unsaleables among trading partners through cost negotiation and mechanisms such as trade allowances that have become common practice, Hoff emphasized that the emphasis of this report is on how supply chain participants can collaborate to reduce overall unsaleables.
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